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The New Indian Express wishes its readers a
Happy Ganesh Chaturthi

Our offices and press will remain closed today and there will be no issue of the paper dated September 1, 2022

MUSK CITES WHISTLEBLOWER AS NEW REASON TO NIX TWITTER DEAL

Tesla CEO Elon Musk said in an SEC filing on Tuesday that he has additional reasons to rescind the offer to buy out Twitter

SECURITY CHIEF WHO FLAGGED PROBLEMS FIRED

The billionaire cited a whistle blower complaint filed by Twitter's former head of security Peiter Zatko about the firm's negligence in rooting out fake accounts that spread disinformation. Twitter later fired Zatko for "poor performance". Musk has now served Zatko with a subpoena asking him to share any documents or messages on Twitter's fake accounts

BILLIONAIRE'S MOVE INVALID, SAYS TWITTER

- In his letter to Twitter, Musk said Zatko's allegations provide extra reasons to end the deal, in case his termination notice given in July is "determined to be invalid for any reason"
- Twitter said Musk's attempt to back out of the deal based on statements made by a third party is 'invalid and wrongful'

$44 billion
THE PRICE AT WHICH ELON MUSK HAD AGREED TO BUY TWITTER IN APRIL 2022

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Anganwadi teacher burns 3-yr-old boy's private parts

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Tumakuru

IN a disgusting incident, an anganwadi assistant teacher allegedly burnt the private parts of a three-year-old boy after being irritated with the child frequently wetting his pants. The 28-year-old assistant teacher Rashmi reportedly used lit matchsticks to burn the child's private parts.

The incident, which occurred a week ago at an anganwadi centre at Godekere village in Chikkanayakanahalli taluk in Tumkur district, came to light only on Monday when the child's grandmother was bathing him. She noticed burn wounds on the child's genitals and on the right lap.

The family brought it to the notice of officials concerned through whom the information reached the District Child Protection Officer Pavithra on Monday. A child counsellor was sent to the victim's house to counsel the child and the family.

After treatment at the local public health centre, the child, who incidentally hails from the Dalit 'Korama' community, is recuperating.

Had lost mother recently

The child had lost his mother just 15 days ago after battling fourth stage cervical cancer, and was being looked after by his father and his grandmother. The victim has an elder sibling who studies in class 6.

The child's parents had been working at a coffee estate in Chikmagalur for years, and moved to Godekere only after the death of his mother.

The child used to frequently wet his pants, which is quite normal among young children, especially among those traumatised by the loss of a parent when so young.

CONTINUED ON: P5

India likely to rush aid to flood-hit Pak

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

WITH Pakistan reeling under unprecedented floods that have submerged one-third of the country and claimed at least 1,100 lives, India is considering sending aid to the neighbouring country on humanitarian grounds, sources said.

"India has always extended humanitarian aid to countries in need," point out an official, adding that a decision on assistance to Pakistan will be taken in a day or two.

On Tuesday, the Lahore Chamber of Commerce sought permission from the Pakistan government to import vegetables from India. The floods have destroyed crops on thousands of acres. The development comes a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that he was "saddened" to see the devastation in Pakistan and Pak Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said Islamabad was considering importing vegetables from India to deal with high prices and shortage.

If the BJP government decides to extend humanitarian aid to Pakistan, it will be the first time since 2014 that India will be doing so. India had sent aid to Pakistan during the 2010 floods and before that for the 2005 earthquake. Congress-led UPA government was in power on both the occasions. P12

SEER ROW

Statements of victims recorded in C'durga court

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chitradurga

TWO minor girls, victims in POCSO case registered against Murugha Mutt seer **Dr Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru**, recorded their statements before the First Additional District and Sessions in Chitradurga on Tuesday. The two were taken to the court from Government Bala Mandir at 2.30 pm under tight security with Child Welfare Committee officials and Odanadi members also accompanying them.

A large number of people assembled at the court and police resorted to a mild lathi-charge to disperse the crowd.

Chitradurga MLA G H Thippareddy who interacted with the media after visiting the seer in the morning said, "Swamiji told me that he is pained by the developments and that he will cooperate with the probe. He also alleged that it was a big conspiracy hatched against him".

Thippareddy further said, "The victims and the pontiff are from my constituency and I would like to meet the girls too if permissible under law".

In the wake of Monday's incident when the pontiff was not found for some time, police have deployed more security personnel at the exit and entry points of the mutt. District Armed Reserve (DAR) personnel have also been deployed. All vehicles entering and moving out of the mutt are being checked by the police. Security at Government Home for Girls has also been beefed up.

Meanwhile, the district police on Tuesday invoked The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 (Act) against the accused as one of the victims belongs to the SC community.

SC ORDERS STATUS QUO, NO GANESHA FEST AT IDGAH MAIDAN

Quashes K'taka HC verdict which allowed the celebration at the ground in Bengaluru

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday disallowed the use of a contentious Idgah Maidan in Bengaluru's Chamarajpet for this year's Ganesha Chaturthi festival. After almost one-and-a-half hours of hearing, a bench of justices Indira Banerjee, A S Oka and M M Sundresh asked both the parties — Karnataka State Board of Auqaf, Central Muslim Association of Karnataka and the state of Karnataka — to maintain status quo.

"Maintain status quo for some days. You can hold your pooja somewhere else," Justice Indira Banerjee, the presiding judge of the bench said. "200 years, whatever was not held, so maintain the status quo. 200 years it has not been done. No Ganesha festival on this land," Justice Oka added.

Earlier in the day, a two-judge bench of justices Hemant Gupta and Sudhanshu Dhulia was divided on the matter and sent it to Chief Justice of India U U Lalit. The three-judge bench was constituted after senior advocate Dushyant Dave made an urgent mention before the CJI, saying if the matter is not heard on Tueday, status quo of 200 years will be disturbed.

The court's order was passed on petition challenging Karnataka High Court's verdict allowing the use the Idgah Maidan for Ganesha Chaturthi. The petitioners argued that it was a burial ground till 1877 after which it served as Idgah for the local Muslim population.

Appearing for the state of Karnataka, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta argued that the Maidan it was always government land in revenue records. Mehta urged the bench to permit a government-managed temple to conduct Ganesha festival on August 30 and 31.

Idol to be installed at Hubballi Idgah as HC refuses to interfere

Bengaluru: In a late night order, the Karnataka High Court declined to interfere with the permission granted by the Commissioner of Hubballi-Dharwad Municipal Corporation (HDMC) to a Hindu organisation to install Ganesha idol at Idgah Maidan in Hubballi. Justice Ashok S Kinagi passed the interim order after hearing arguments on the petition filed by Anjuman-e-Islam, represented by its president Mohammed Yousuf Savanur | P4

Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel maintain vigil at the disputed Chamarajpet Idgah Maidan in Bengaluru on Tuesday | VINOD KUMAR T

TECH HUB MAROONED

Traffic comes to a standstill in front of a flooded stretch of the Outer Ring Road, between Marathahalli and Bellandur, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. The state capital witnessed heavy downpour on Monday night, which caused water-logging in several localities, overstretching its infrastructure and inconveniencing scores of commuters and pedestrians | NAGARAJA GADEKAL | P4

Rift wide open in J'khand, Soren sends Rahul SOS

SHAHID FARIDI @ New Delhi

AS many as 32 MLAs of the ruling alliance in Jharkhand left for Raipur on Tuesday amid growing differences between the partners — JMM and Congress — over how to tide over the crisis following reports that the Election Commission has decided to disqualify Chief Minister Hemant Soren for holding an office of profit.

This correspondent was the first to break the news on Monday night that they will be shifted to Raipur the next day.

The decision on Raipur was taken after two days of tussle between the two parties. Soren wanted to send them to Kolkata. But Congress forced him to send them to Chhattisgarh, a state ruled by the party. Soren had argued that since Kolkata was closer to his constituency Dumka, it would be easier for him to look after the MLAs.

Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren with UPA MLAs at the Ranchi airport on Tuesday.

BJP TRIES TO FISH IN TROUBLED WATERS

Hoping to exploit the growing schism, the BJP claimed the chief minister would be ousted and asked the ruling alliance MLAs to support a BJP-led government

Soren shares excellent rapport with his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee, whom he had reportedly sounded out about his plan to move the MLAs to her state. But the Congress flatly refused to allow Mamata to have any role in the matter. It told Soren that MLAs have to be taken either to Raipur or to Jaipur.

Differences have also emerged over Soren's plan to stay in Ranchi along with the ministers, including four belonging to the Congress, so that the government continues to function smoothly. The Congress is opposed to the idea. An exasperated CM has complained to Rahul Gandhi about the problems faced by him, especially about the role of Congress general secretary incharge of Jharkhand Avinash Pande. Pande's statements and actions have brought the difference between the two parties into the public domain.

Pande has had a chequered history as an AICC manager. He was AICC general secretary in-charge of Rajasthan when Sachin Pilot walked out with 22 MLAs. When Pilot returned to Jaipur after his failed coup, one of his conditions was the removal of Pande as state incharge, as the latter had aligned completely with Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. Pande was then dropped as party general secretary.

You're 'intoxicated' by power: Anna to Kejri

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

A day before the operation of Delhi's scam-tainted new liquor policy is buried for good, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal got stinker from his former *guru* **Anna Hazare**, who alleged his *chela* was "intoxicated by power".

"Like liquor, power intoxicates. You are intoxicated by power, it seems," he wrote to Kejriwal, lighting into him for his government's excise policy that is mired in corruption. Hazare recalled that that in Kejriwal's book *Swaraj*, he had said no liquor shops should be opened without the approval of locals. "You have forgotten those ideals after becoming CM," he rued.

"In Delhi, liquor shops were being opened in every corner of the city... People seem to be trapped in a circle of money for power and power for money. It doesn't suit a party that emerged from a major movement," he chided.

For his part, Kejriwal blamed the letter on the BJP, saying it was using Hazare to target his government since the CBI found nothing in its probe against Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

Chastising Kejriwal, Hazare said that "in every ward, he (Kejriwal) opened a liquor shop and age limit (was) reduced to 21 from 25 years. He's promoting liquor. When I was protesting, he used to call me his *guru*. Where are those emotions now?" In a related development, the CBI searched Sisodia's locker at a PNB branch at Ghaziabad. He later claimed the the probe agency gave him a "clean chit". "Only my wife's jewellery worth ₹70,000-80,000 was in the locker," he said.

EXPRESS READ

64 more J&K Congress leaders quit, join Azad

Jammu: The spate of resignations in Jammu and Kashmir Congress continues, with 64 more leaders, including a former DyCM, quitting and joining the Ghulam Nabi Azad camp on Tuesday.

Finance Ministry reviews performance of PSBs

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry on Tuesday reviewed performance of public sector banks in the backdrop of first quarter numbers and asked them to step up lending to productive sectors.

Star, Zee in marriage of convenience

VENKATA KRISHNA B @ Chennai

THREE days after acquiring Indian broadcast rights for the upcoming International Cricket Council (ICC) cycle of events for around $3.125 billion, Disney Star Tuesday sub-licensed a part of its deal to rival Zee Entertainment Enterprises. In a highly competitive market, such deals are unheard of in Indian television industry, particularly among sports networks.

The agreement between the two networks has caught the industry by surprise. For starters, both the networks had placed separate bids in Dubai last week, and Disney Star eventually secured the rights for the 2024-27 period in a deal worth around $3.125 billion (₹25,000 crore), which was significantly higher than the rest. Star is currently paying only $1.9 bn for the current eight-year cycle that ends in 2023. Interestingly, the ICC had allowed a provision where the winner had the rights to sub-license.

While the numbers did raise eye-brows, it also showed how Disney Star was desperate to hold on to the ICC rights. After losing out on IPL digital rights to Viacom18, Disney Star's OTT platform Hotstar is without a popular cricket content, which is why it went big for ICC rights. Having secured the digital rights — a market with huge growth potential — and by giving away the TV rights to its rival Zee, Disney Star would now be able to get back part of its huge investment. As per the agreement, Zee will televise all the ICC men's events. What role Sony Pictures Network — which has already announced a merger with Zee — plays remains to be seen.

According to market analysts, the deal seems pre-arranged as such an agreement can't be reached in a short span of time.

As far as Zee is concerned, it is a new beginning for them as after years of legal battles — they were blacklisted by the BCCI and ICC for launching the now defunct Indian Cricket League — they have finally landed live cricket for their television.

RAINFALL PATTERN

Bengaluru's skies puzzle even weathermen

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

BENGALURU wears many caps — of being known as the tech capital of the country, a startup hub and most of all for its salubrious climate. But now, it has become a unique place of study for weathermen.

India Meteorological Department (IMD) officials from across India are keen to assess and study Bengaluru's climate, the temperature variations, the rainfall pattern, the changes and the topography. This is because while one part of Bengaluru records 15 cm rainfall, another part of the city, like the CBD records zero rainfall.

"Due to the unique weather variations, Bengaluru is drawing weathermen from across the country to study it. There is not just rainfall difference in short distance locations of the city, but also temperature variations. This kind of changes are usually observed in hill stations, but since Bengaluru is not, it is different and is catching everyone's attention," a senior IMD official told *TNIE*.

The official pointed out that similar patterns are also being observed in Kodagu, where in if Bagamanadala records 21 cm rainfall, in Virajpet it is 3 cm. Such drastic difference is being reported in Bengaluru too, but not in Pune or other places similar to Bengaluru otherwise.

Immediate and drastic weather patterns are being closely recorded for tabulation by the IMD and Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority (KSNDMC) observatories. P2